

From: DR Basso
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/10/02 12:14pm
Subject: microsoft settlement proposal

The proposed Microsoft settlement is a fraud on the consumers of this country. It does not adequately address the practices the company undertook to draw public scrutiny in the first place and it rewards the monopoly with a backdoor entrance into one of the major areas of technology where it lags behind its competitors ? the education market.

Far from reigning in a conglomerate that used its market position to terrorize competitors, this settlement gives Microsoft an even larger market share in education.

The software proposed is almost entirely for Windows computers. The offer provides only a very limited selection for competing operating systems such as Mac OS.

Public school officials, under the gun to get the most "stuff" they can get for as little money, will have little choice but to take up this offer ? thereby expanding the company's reach and dealing a severe blow to firms such as Apple.

Besides Apple, however, there are other firms that make software that compete with the items Microsoft proposes to offer schools. Why should those firms be injured in the form of fewer sales by a settlement that is meant to punish Microsoft? It makes no sense to try and increase competition by injuring the competitors you seek to aid.

Also, why should schools have to settle for refurbished and outdated computers. If Microsoft really plans to offer computers to schools, it should be ordered to purchase new machines that will have a long shelf life (in the relative world of computers). Refurbished machines probably already are near the end of their useful life in regards to what new programs they may be able to run.

Finally, I believe the total value of the settlement is far below the actual damage done to competitors. The value should be increased, perhaps even doubled.

Daniel R. Basso